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Eidenberg report acknowledges spying

By BEN OEHLER

Eugene Eidenberg's report on military surveillance released Friday shows that there have been instances of snooping on the Twin Cities campus which violate University policy.

But the Eidenberg report concluded that the findings are not as great as the allegations, and breaches of policy have their root in "administrative gaps", rather than malevolence.

Eidenberg, assistant vice president for administration, began his inquiry at the request of President Malcolm Moos in early January and presented his report to the Board of Regents Friday.

The investigation was initiated by Moos after two national television programs alleged that military intelligence (MI) agents had easy access to student records and a cooperative relationship with University police.

After interviewing 24 people including several former MI agents, a variety of administrators and police officials, representatives of the government, a records clerk and a police lieutenant, Eidenberg concluded "that there is truth in the charges that have been made, but truth which must be viewed in the full context of

period, Eidenberg explains, but a new administration which took over between July 1968 and July 1969 "raised the question of whether information disclosure practices were consistent with the January 1968 Regents' policy."

Eidenberg found no substantial breaches of policy occurring after January 1970 and believes that a new and more defined administration policy as well as other "steps" will prevent a recurrence.



Eugene Eidenberg

events."

Eidenberg found:

- That before January 1970, federal investigating officers were allowed access to confidential student records even after the 1968 Regents' policy prohibiting such disclosure.
- That the University police department "has developed information that is not necessary for them to meet their responsibilities"—including the storage of photographs of nonviolent campus events and an event file which lists individuals who have participated in particular demonstrations and rallies.
- That on "at least one occasion" the University police gave photographs to an MI agent—another direct violation of policy.
- That from 1968 to 1970, MI agents regularly visited University police (on the average of once a week) to gather information about demonstrations and other events. (Communication between agents and University police usually of "a highly general nature about events rather than people" and information available from other sources, such as the Daily and leaflets.)

Eidenberg said policy violations were mainly due to "gaps" in administrative policy and its interpretation, and should be viewed within the context of administrative changes at the University and the national and political turmoil of the past decade.

Eidenberg claims that 90 to 98 per cent of the MI inquiries to Admissions and Records were for the purpose of conducting so-called "Personal Security Clearance" checks that had been authorized by the student involved.

He said policy violations were caused because most admissions and records staff members were either unaware of the 1968 Regents' policy or had received a memo (reportedly authorized by the man who was then dean of admissions and records) from the University recorder saying that government agents still were "entitled" to the records.

The office was going through a major reorganization during this

Eidenberg describes the University police department as one of many across the nation with which "Military Intelligence routinely developed liaison" since the 1967 Executive Order of President Lyndon Johnson assigning the Army the responsibility "for gathering information that would be necessary if the Army were called upon to operate in an American city to quell a civil disturbance."

And while Eidenberg did find some cases of cooperation between University police and MI agents, he said that "90 to 98 per cent of the contacts were precipitated by and limited to legitimate security clearance record checks with the permission of the student (although during periods of tension on the campus, such as spring of 1970, the agents devoted all of their time to watching events and situations that might escalate beyond control of local law enforcement)."

Further, Eidenberg said most discussions between police and MI were "of a highly general nature," most information received by MI from the police was publicly available; and the MI was never permitted to study or otherwise routinely go through police department records and files.

"The police department-military intelligence link," Eidenberg wrote, "was built on the traditional law enforcement assumption of cooperation between 'enforcement' agencies with similar if not identical missions."

Eidenberg found that University police routinely gather intelligence for their own purposes.

He said that in the past two years the administration has been involved in "frequent and time-consuming contingency planning to avoid over and/or under reaction to specific events" which necessitated minimal information to make the "contingency planning process something more than random guess work."

Eidenberg concluded, "The question then is not whether the police should be developing basic information, but whether this necessary activity is being conducted under proper civilian controls and lines of accountability."

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Charges were also made that foreign students have been subjected to political surveillance and been forced into taking lie detector tests. But Eidenberg was able to find no evidence of University participation in any area which would support those allegations.

And he concluded:

"All of the former military intelligence agents who have been assigned to the University of Minnesota, and with whom I have talked, have indicated their own concern that news accounts have distorted the real nature of what has happened on our campus. The risks are real enough, but there appear to be no practices that cannot be easily and permanently changed (if they have not already been altered) through administrative action and on-going attention.

"Our policy goal has been that information provided to the University or generated within the University must always be used for fully legitimate purposes, under proper lines of responsibility and accountability."